

*For The Record!*

Comments on Chesapeake Bay Program

For EPA Bay TMDL Meeting

October 7, 2010

By

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My name is Jim Belote. I am the owner operator of a four generation family Century Farm in Accomack County. I am also retired as an Extension Agent for agriculture having worked 24 years in Accomack County and 10 years in Virginia Beach and Chesapeake. I have a Master's Degree in Horticulture from North Carolina State and a B.S. Degree in Agronomy from Virginia Tech and have been involved in Soil and Water Conservation for 34 years. I have served as a Director for many years on the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District and the Virginia Dare Soil and Water Conservation District. I was also the County TMDL representative for Virginia Cooperative Extension for years in Accomack County and have been involved in the Bay Program as related to agriculture since its beginning.

In regards to the proposed program, I do not like what you have proposed. I do not think it will work as written and I predict it will mostly be a failure. It intrudes further on private property rights and requires enormous sums of taxpayer and private money. That has been the problem with the Bay Program from the beginning and apparently it will continue to be.

The computer model for the Chesapeake Bay Program has been inaccurate from the start. I understand that you have finally admitted that it has its problems. We knew this when you first used it and have complained for years.

For 20 plus years the Bay Program has consumed billions of taxpayer dollars. According to recent news accounts, the Bay program has spent an average of \$291 million a year over the last five years alone and leadership now wants to spend \$491 million a year while our country is going bankrupt. To date, we have a Bay Program based on a computer program that could never show the results needed and billions of taxpayer money spent with little, if any, accountability. Some would term this fiscal irresponsibility. Has there been a misuse of public funds? Why has so much been spent with so little results? Is there a question of competence?

I believe there has been over the years a misrepresentation of facts by those who know better. People knew some things were wrong but did it anyway and billions of taxpayer dollars have been spent and for what?

An outside independent investigative unit should be appointed to investigate this program to date to see why so much money has been spent but so few results obtained. Where has the money gone? Who is responsible for the mess we are in and how do we straighten things out so that the bay is improved as we all desire? We need a new approach to the bay. It should be objective and not political. It should respect private property rights. People should not have regulations shoved down their throat. They should want to do it and we all should be more respectful of how much things cost.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these comments.

Note: Additional Comments - BMP Manual/Six State Computer Model

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